

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge receipt of an Office Action dated February 23, 2006. In this response Applicants have cancelled claims 6-10 without prejudice or disclaimer. Following entry of these amendments, claims 1-5 are pending in the application.

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks which follow.

Claim Objections

On page 2 of the Office Action, the PTO has objected to claim 6 as being redundant to claim 1. In this response, Applicants have cancelled claims 6-10 to obviate this issue.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

On page 2 of the Office Action, the PTO has rejected claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Publication 2002/0173085 to Nakajima *et al.* (hereinafter “Nakajima”). Applicants traverse this rejection for the reasons set forth below.

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). See generally MPEP §2131.

Here, Applicants submit that Nakajima fails to disclose “oxidizing an annealed silicon wafer with ozonized water.” For this reason alone, Applicants submit that the outstanding rejection under §102 is improper and should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection under §102.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. An early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions regarding the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 5/23/06

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.